MUTABLE AWARD 2018

ONE TO WATCH

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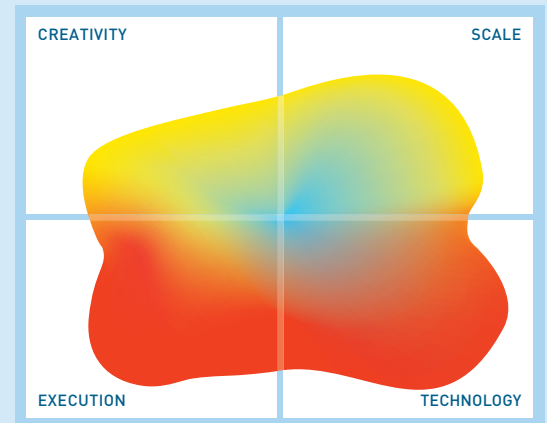Email: dataquality@experian.com

Aperture Data Studio

The company

Experian's roots go back to 1826, but it was not officially founded until 1996 when distinct US and UK-based credit scoring companies were merged to form Experian under the ownership of Great Universal Stores. It was a decade later that the company was de-merged and became independent. It is now headquartered in Ireland and is a public company listed in London. It is part of the FTSE100. Revenues, which are reported in dollars, were $4.3bn in the year ending March 2017. The company has 17,000 employees working in 37 different countries.

> *Like Excel on steroids. It is nice. That's good.*
>
> *It is very cool and very powerful. The things you are doing are pretty good, very top notch.*
>
> *The workflows. They are absolutely really good.*

CREATIVITY	SCALE
EXECUTION	TECHNOLOGY

The image in this Mutable Quadrant is derived from 13 high level metrics, the more the image covers a section the better. Execution metrics relate to the company, Technology to the product, Creativity to both technical and business innovation and Scale covers the potential business and market impact.

What is it?

Experian Aperture Data Studio is the first of what will potentially be several Aperture products, which will enhance and bring together the existing Experian Data Quality offerings to round out a more complete data management solution. Aperture Data Studio is intended to be the next generation of Experian Pandora, the product that Experian acquired from X88, by providing extended capabilities that Experian Pandora does not have, along with improved performance (approximately ten times faster loading thanks, in part, to the use of cache) and a reduced disk requirement (by about 45%).

As far as functionality is concerned, the focus is on the use cases illustrated in *Figure 1*. The product provides data profiling, inspection and preparation for both general use and compliance monitoring; operational data quality and data migration; and support for single customer view initiatives (but see next).

Aperture Data Studio is currently in version 1.1. This version contains the integration of previous standalone offerings, including matching integration; address verification for the UK, United States, Canada and Australia/ New Zealand; and email verification. The company is planning quarterly product releases, and the roadmap shows match harmonisation and support for single customer views, with persistent IDs, in upcoming releases.
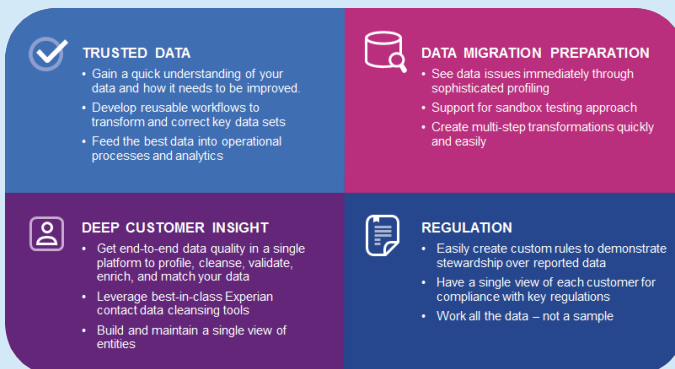

TRUSTED DATA
- Gain a quick understanding of your data and how it needs to be improved.
- Develop reusable workflows to transform and correct key data sets
- Feed the best data into operational processes and analytics

DATA MIGRATION PREPARATION
- See data issues immediately through sophisticated profiling
- Support for sandbox testing approach
- Create multi-step transformations quickly and easily

DEEP CUSTOMER INSIGHT
- Get end-to-end data quality in a single platform to profile, cleanse, validate, enrich, and match your data
- Leverage best-in-class Experian contact data cleansing tools
- Build and maintain a single view of entities

REGULATION
- Easily create custom rules to demonstrate stewardship over reported data
- Have a single view of each customer for compliance with key regulations
- Work all the data – not a sample

Figure 1 – Aperture Data Studio use cases

Collaboration	★★★★⯪	Performance	★★★★⯪
Ease of use	★★★★⯪	Profiling	★★★★★
Enrichment	★★★★⯪	RegComp	★★★⯪
Matching	★★★⯪	Workflow	★★★★⯪

> " I'm impressed. Clean and easy to use, fast install. "
>
> " It is pretty. It is visually appealing. It is inviting. "

What does it do?

The functions that Aperture Data Studio can perform are detailed in *Figure 2*. The one thing that may not be obvious is Experian's enrichment data, which provides demographic profiling elements like Experian Mosaic. This allows users to leverage Experian data attributes with their own information.

The main areas where Aperture Data Studio differs from Experian Pandora (apart from look and feel [Aperture is browser-based], performance and so forth) is in its workflow, and its support for user personas. Further, it has been designed to work within existing technologies stacks. As far as workflow is concerned, Aperture Data Studio separates data profiling (which is done on all your data, not just samples) from data loading. Thus, data profiling is an explicit workflow step and distinct from

running the file. Another feature is that you can do trend analysis: comparing, for example, this week's workflow execution with last week's.

As far as user personas are concerned, Experian Pandora was always intended to be easy to use, but it did not explicitly support different roles, outside of access control. Aperture Data Studio, on the other hand has been designed to offer both self-service and collaboration.

While there are many ways in which Aperture Data Studio represents an advance on Experian Pandora, it does not yet have the maturity of Experian Pandora and it lacks some of the features of the latter. For example, it will not be until later in 2018 that Aperture Data Studio will have the sort of packaged RegComp rules and reports that are currently available in Experian Pandora. Similarly, Aperture Data Studio does not provide alerts, although these can be created using the product's SDK.

Why should you care?

Most vendors, in any market, try to meet modern requirements by bolting on extra capabilities. If that is simply a question of adding on a feature here or there, that is not problem. However, when it comes to fundamentals such as self-service and collaboration, these are not the type of services that are amenable to bolting on. Experian is therefore to be applauded for biting the bullet and developing a product suitable for the third decade of this century. Of course, Aperture Data Studio is not yet complete and both new potential users, and existing Experian Pandora customers, may wish to wait – depending on the features required – until the product is more mature. Fortunately, with quarterly releases, this is likely to be sooner rather than later.
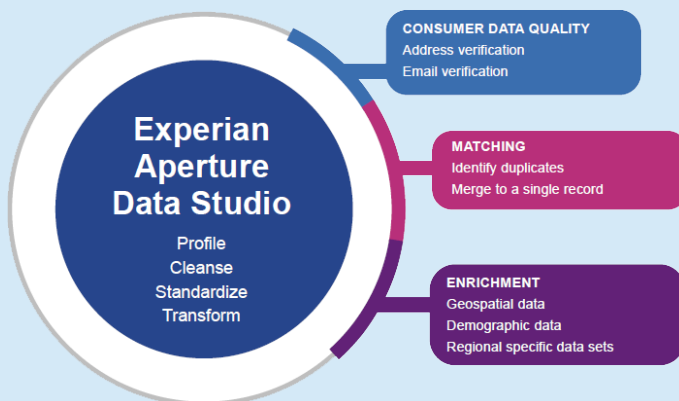

Figure 2 – Aperture Data Studio functional components

load processes. Moreover, during profiling you can choose which columns to profile rather than profiling the whole table. Address and email verification can also be defined as steps within a workflow, as can functions you have written using either R or JavaScript. Further, it is worth commenting that you can explore and drill-down from a workflow without having to run that workflow, which is not the case with some other products. This means users can save time to check the workflow without having to spend time

The Bottom Line

Aperture Data Studio looks like a modern application and has – in some cases – the sort of modern features that businesses require from their data quality management solution. We expect great things from the product as new releases are rolled out.

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